

North Carolina Prevention Report Card 2008



A Progress Report on Prevention & Health in North Carolina, 2005–2007



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Notes:

- i. Youth who currently use any tobacco product.
- ii. Body Mass Index (BMI = weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared) of 25-29.9 is overweight, and BMI of 30+ is obese.
- iii. Using pediatric growth charts, overweight is 85th-95th percentile weight for height, and obese is 95th percentile or more.
- iv. Recommended guideline for adults is 30+ minutes moderate activity on 5+ days/week OR 20+ minutes vigorous activity on 3+ days/week.
- v. Recommended guideline for children and adolescents is 60+ minutes moderate intensity activity most days of the week.
- vi. Among adults who stopped smoking in the past year or now smoke every day or some days AND who saw a health professional in the past year.
- vii. Among smokers, continuous smoking before, during, or after pregnancy.
- viii. Among adults who stopped smoking for 1+ days in past 12 months while trying to quit.
- ix. Smoke-free only, not including restaurants with ventilated areas.
- x. Counties with a Winner's Circle school team, community team or participating restaurant.
- xi. Among children who live within 1 mile from school who walk to school, and among children who live within 2 miles of school who bike to school.



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January 2008

Dear Prevention Partners:



I am pleased to present our latest Prevention Report Card on North Carolina's biggest health problems: tobacco use, poor nutrition and physical inactivity. The news is mixed. Since our last report card was issued in 2005, we have made significant improvement in some areas. But progress on the State's overall prevention grades has stalled.

Tobacco use among both adults and youth has decreased significantly. Three quarters of hospitals across the state now prohibit tobacco use campus wide – in and around buildings, sidewalks, parking lots, lawn areas and in vehicles. And in 2008, smoking will be prohibited inside all state government buildings and public schools. But there are still 1.5 million adult smokers in North Carolina. It is unacceptable that the cigarette tax in North Carolina remains among the lowest in the nation when raising it would prevent thousands of unnecessary illnesses and early deaths, and save millions of dollars in medical costs.

North Carolina's youth obesity rate is the fifth worst in the nation, and two thirds of adults are overweight or obese. And the proportion of people getting the recommended amount of physical activity has declined across all age groups. Without a change, the number of North Carolinians dying early from heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes will continue to grow.

Unfortunately, it has gotten much easier to be unhealthy. The only way to systematically address our health crisis is by making a long term commitment to prevention at work, in our communities, schools, hospitals and at home. NC Prevention Partners is working hard to create environments that will make it easier for North Carolinians to get affordable, healthy food options, tobacco-free air and regular physical activity. We look forward to expanding our partnerships with leaders in the public and private sector to build strong prevention policies and programs.

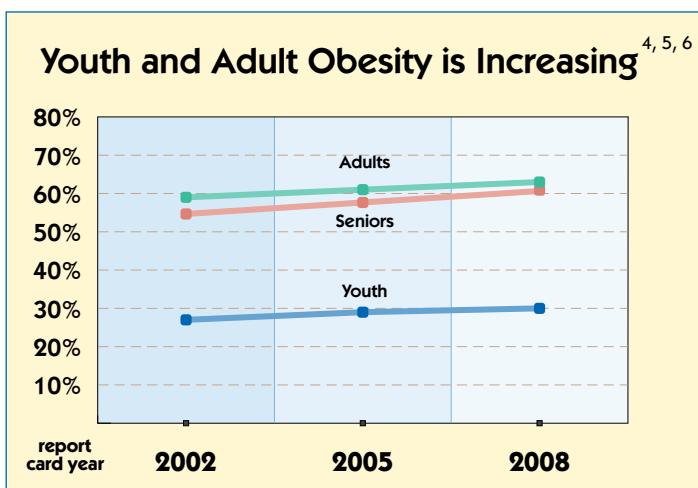
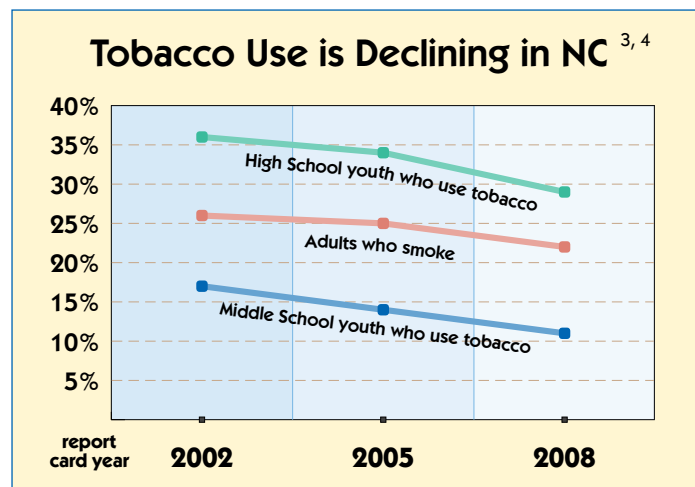
Working together, we can put prevention first for a healthier North Carolina.

Meg Molloy, DrPH, MPH, RD
Executive Director
NC Prevention Partners

Trends in Tobacco Use, Obesity, and Physical Activity, 2002–2008*

More North Carolinians are saying “NO!” to tobacco.

- Tobacco use among middle school students declined by 40%, from 17% in 2002 to 11% in 2008.^{1, i}
- Tobacco use decreased by 20% among high school students (from 36% to 29%), and smoking is down by 14% among adults (from 26% to 22%).^{1, 2, i}

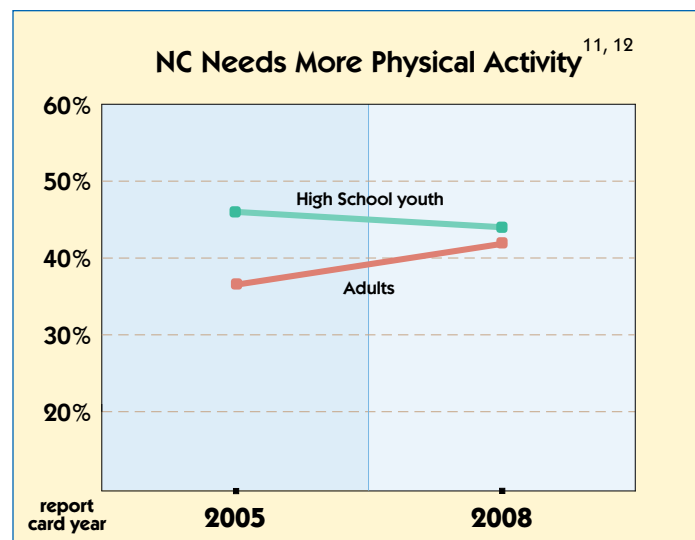


Obesity in North Carolina has gotten worse rapidly.

- Two-thirds (63%) of adults are overweight or obese, compared to 59% in 2002. Rates of overweight and obesity are slightly higher (62%) among those ages 65 and older, compared to 56% in 2002.^{7, ii}
- Almost one-third of high school youth (30%) are overweight or obese, compared to 27% in 2002.^{8, iii}

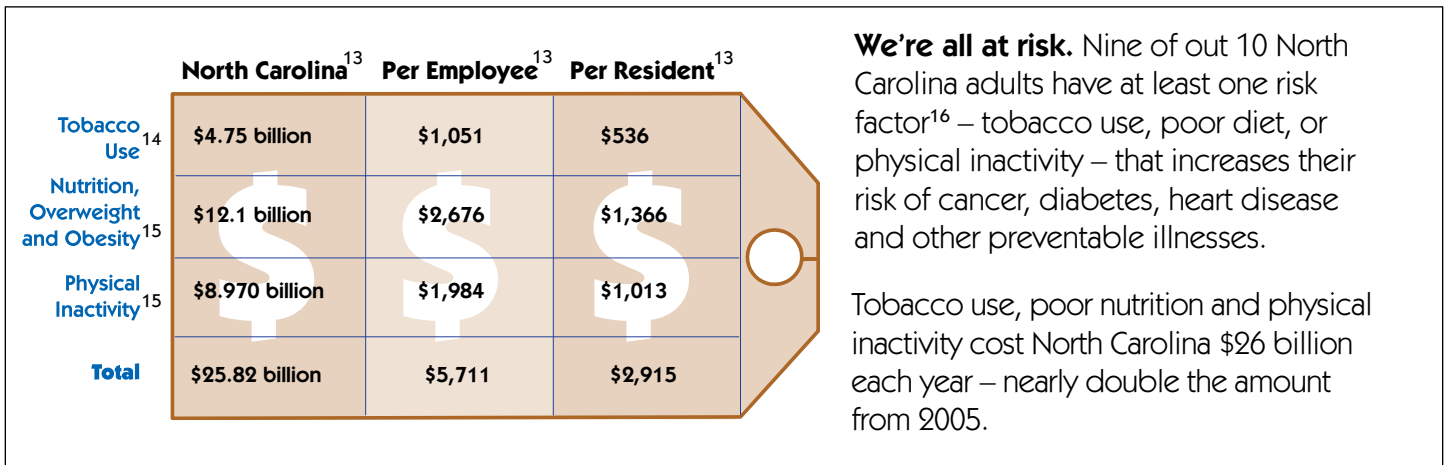
Children get more physical activity than adults, but no one is getting enough.

- Less than half (42%) of adults do not get regular physical activity.^{9, iv}
- Only about half of high school and middle school youth are getting the recommended amount of physical activity.^{10, v}



*Report Card Issue Date
(Data collected over multiple years).

Why Focus on Prevention?



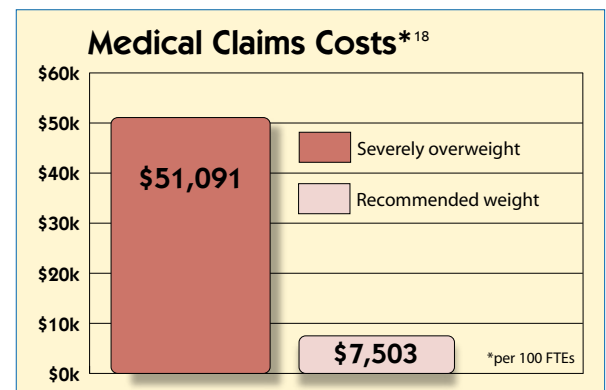
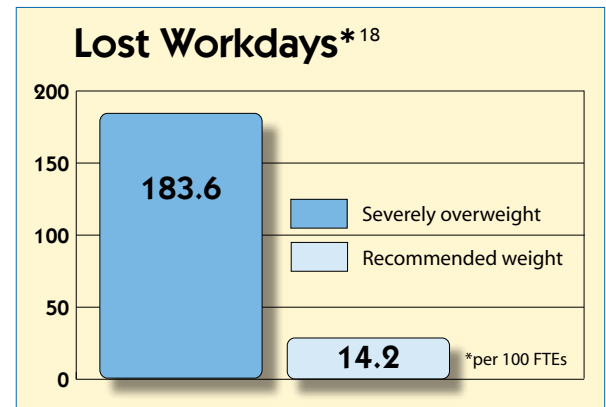
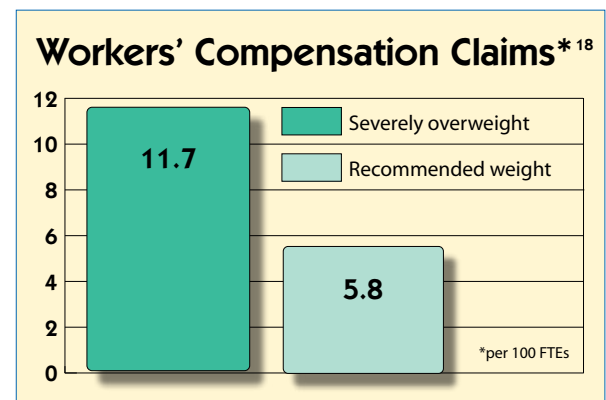
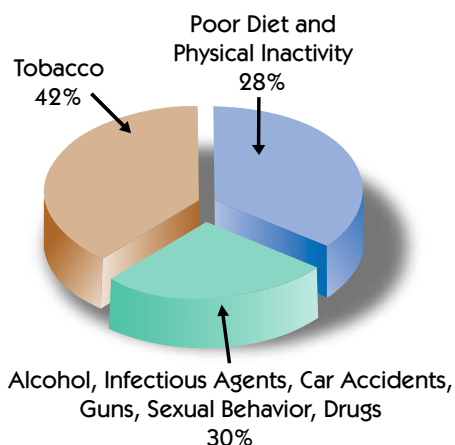
We're all at risk. Nine of out 10 North Carolina adults have at least one risk factor¹⁶ – tobacco use, poor diet, or physical inactivity – that increases their risk of cancer, diabetes, heart disease and other preventable illnesses.

Tobacco use, poor nutrition and physical inactivity cost North Carolina \$26 billion each year – nearly double the amount from 2005.

Healthy Employees Work Better and Reduce Employer Costs.

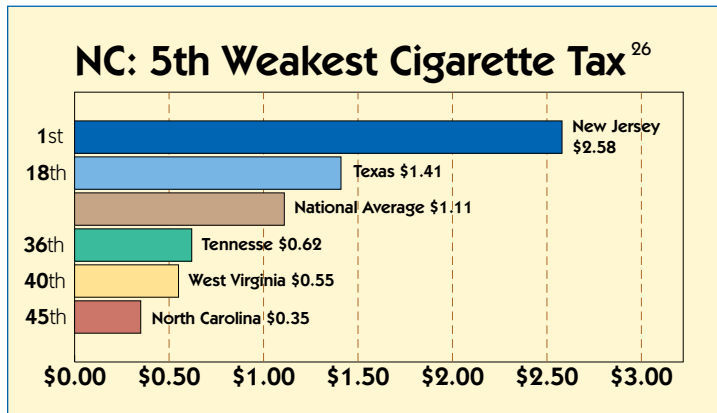
On average, employers spend \$18,000 per employee on health related costs, including medical care, other benefits and productivity costs.¹⁷ Employees who are severely overweight file twice as many workers' compensation claims, have nearly seven times the medical claims costs, and miss thirteen times more work days per year than employees at their recommended weight.¹⁸

Focus on Critical Prevention Issues. Nearly three quarters of preventable deaths are caused by tobacco use, poor nutrition and physical inactivity.¹⁹ NC Prevention Partners offers programs for the workplace, school, community and home that can help change these behaviors.



2008 Tobacco Grade: C (same as 2005)

One in four North Carolinians ages 25 – 55, and nearly one in three ages 18-24, are smokers.²⁰ Increasing cost reduces cigarette purchasing and smoking rates,²¹ but the cigarette tax in North Carolina is still just 35 cents, less than one third of the national average.²² Even a modest increase shows results. After the slight cigarette tax increase of 30 cents in 2005-06, there was a 11% decrease in adult smoking and a 15% decrease in tobacco use among high school youth.²³

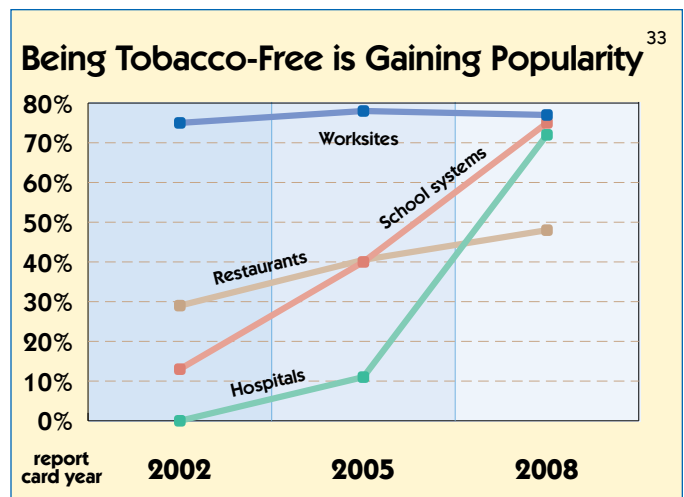


- North Carolina has the fifth lowest cigarette tax in the nation at just \$0.35/pack. The national average is \$1.11/pack.²⁴
- Seven southern states have higher cigarette taxes than North Carolina, including Texas, Tennessee, Arkansas, West Virginia, Alabama, Georgia and Louisiana.²⁴
- A tax increase of \$0.75 a pack would prevent 125,000 North Carolinians from ever starting to smoke and 37,000 early, smoking-related deaths.²⁵

- More than 75% of N.C. hospitals are tobacco-free campus wide, compared to just 11% in 2005.²⁷
- All N.C. health insurance plans offer tobacco cessation benefits.²⁸
- Only one in ten youth under age 18 purchased tobacco, down by half from 2002 (20%).²⁹

More supportive programs are needed.

- Only half (48%) of restaurants have tobacco-free policies.³⁰
- While more than 100 hospitals are tobacco-free campus wide, less than half (47%) have comprehensive tobacco cessation programs.³¹
- One in three (30%) smokers did not receive cessation counseling from their doctor, slightly worse than in 2005.^{32, vi}



Recommendations:

Policymakers: Support increases in North Carolina's cigarette tax, tobacco-free legislation, better enforcement of existing smoking regulations, and hard-hitting public education campaigns. Visit www.ncpreventionpartners.org/policy.

Healthcare Providers: Ask your patients if they use tobacco and, if they do, help them quit. Start the conversation at www.ncpreventionpartners.org/startingtheconversation.

Employers: Create a tobacco free workplace policy. Help your employees who use tobacco to quit by offering them cessation benefits.

Behaviors

| INDICATOR | 2005** | Current Status | 2010 Target | 2008 Grade |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------------|-------------|------------|
| Current adult smokers ³⁴ | 25% | 22% | 12% | C |
| High school students who use tobacco products ³⁵ | 34% | 29% | 21% | C |
| Middle school students who use tobacco products ³⁵ | 14% | 11% | 5% | B |
| Pregnant women who smoke ^{36, vii} | 11% | 14% | 10% | C |
| Adults making a serious quit attempt ^{37, viii} | - | 57% | 75% | C |

Environment and Policy

Showed Improvement

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------|----------|
| Local school systems that are 100% smoke-free for all campus and school-related events ³⁷ | 46/115 = 40% | 86/115 = 75% | 100% | B |
| Medicare smokers hospitalized for heart attack that were offered smoking cessation counseling ³⁸ | 68% | 99% | 100% | A |
| Private and public health plans offering cessation benefit, rider or program ³⁹ | 100% | 100% | 100% | A |
| Minors buying tobacco products in retail outlets ⁴⁰ | 15% | 11% | 5% | B |
| Hospitals with tobacco-free campus wide policy ⁴¹ | 11% | 75% | 100% | B |

Stayed About the Same

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|----------|
| Adults reporting that their worksite prohibits smoking in indoor public and indoor work areas ⁴² | 78% | 77% | 100% | C |
| Smokers counseled by a provider within the past year to stop smoking ^{42, vi} | 76% | 70% | 100% | C |
| Tobacco-free health departments ⁴³ | - | 66% | 100% | D |

Flunking

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------|----------|
| Per pack cigarette tax vs. \$1.112 national average ⁴⁴ | \$0.05 | \$0.35 | \$2.00 | F |
| Tobacco-free restaurants ^{45, ix} | 36% | 48% | 100% | F |
| Hospitals with smoking cessation program ⁴⁶ | 42/110 = 38% | 69/147 = 47% | 100% | F |

*Grades are based on Healthy People 2010 objectives and targets for the nation. Grading scales vary by indicator.

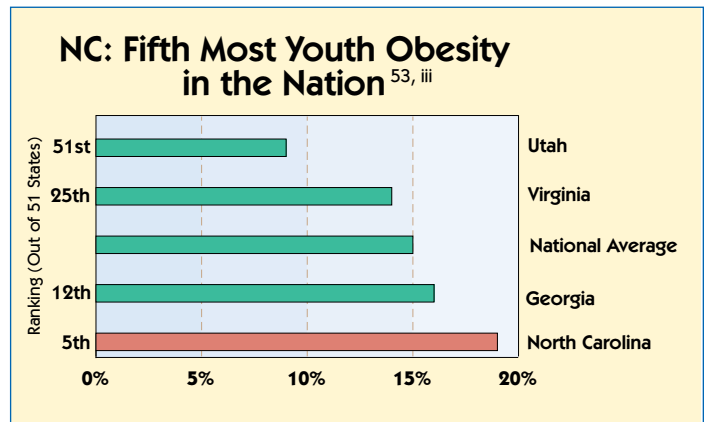
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Obesity is epidemic in North Carolina.

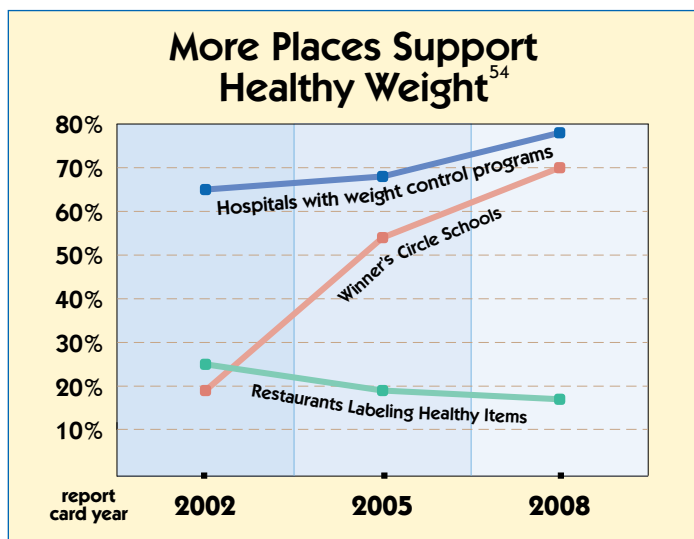
Youth obesity in North Carolina is the fifth highest in the nation, and one third of NC youth are overweight or obese.^{47, 48, iii} North Carolina has more overweight or obese adults than two-thirds of the nation.^{49, ii}

On average, youth ages two – 17 in the U.S. see 17,000 food ads each year. Three out of four commercials children see promote candy, junk food or cereal; only 4% are for dairy products, 1% for fruit juices and none are for fresh fruits or vegetables.⁵⁰

Only one in four adults and seniors eats at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.⁵¹ Youth are doing worse (15%).⁵²



More programs support healthy weight in hospitals and schools, but restaurants lag behind.



- Almost three quarters of school districts have Winner's Circle Healthy Dining programs, a tripling since 2002.⁵⁵
- Nearly 80% of hospitals have weight control programs or nutrition centers, up from 65% in 2002.⁵⁶
- However, four out of five restaurants do not highlight healthier choices.⁵⁷

Recommendations:

Policymakers: Support legislation that increases the availability, labeling and reduces cost of healthier foods and drinks in schools. Visit www.ncpreventionpartners.org/policy.

Healthcare Providers: Ask your patients about their diet, and work with them to make it more balanced. Start the conversation at www.ncpreventionpartners.org/startingtheconversation.

Employers: Healthy employees work better. Learn how to access a simple workplace prevention audit and sample wellness policies at www.ncpreventionpartners.org.

Restaurant Owners/Operators: Help your customers make more informed food choices. Visit www.winnercirclehealthydining.com.

Nutrition Grades*

Behaviors

| INDICATOR | 2005** | Current Status | 2010 Target | 2008 Grade |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------------|-------------|------------|
| Adults who are overweight or obese ^{58, ii} | 61% | 63% | 40% | F |
| Adults who eat at least five fruits and vegetables each day ⁵⁹ | 23% | 23% | 75% | F |
| High school youth who are obese ^{60, iii} | 13% | 13% | 5% | F |
| High school youth who eat at least five fruits and vegetables each day ⁶⁰ | 18% | 15% | 75% | F |
| Middle school youth who are obese ^{61, iii} | - | 16% | 5% | F |
| Seniors who are who are overweight or obese ^{62, ii} | 59% | 62% | 40% | F |
| Seniors who eat at least five fruits and vegetables each day ⁶³ | 27% | 27% | 75% | D |

Environment and Policy

Showed Improvement

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|------|----------|
| School districts with Winner's Circle Healthy Dining Programs ⁶⁴ | 62/115 = 54% | 77/115 = 70% | 100% | C |
| Public health plans offering nutrition benefit, rider, or program ⁶⁵ | 100% | 100% | 100% | A |
| Hospitals offering weight control programs or nutrition centers ⁶⁶ | 75/110 = 68% | 115/147 = 78% | 100% | B |

Stayed About the Same

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------|----------|
| Counties with Winner's Circle Healthy Dining Programs ^{67, x} | 93/100 = 93% | 87/100 = 87% | 100% | B |
| Private health plans offering nutrition benefit, rider, or program ⁶⁸ | 100% | 67% | 100% | C |

Flunking

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|----------|
| Restaurants labeling certain items as healthy ⁶⁹ | 19% | 17% | 100% | F |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|----------|

*Grades are based on Healthy People 2010 objectives and targets for the nation. Grading scales vary by indicator.

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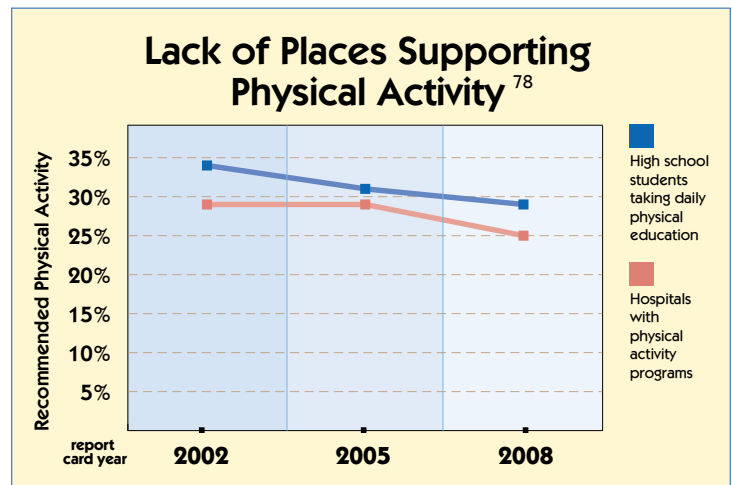
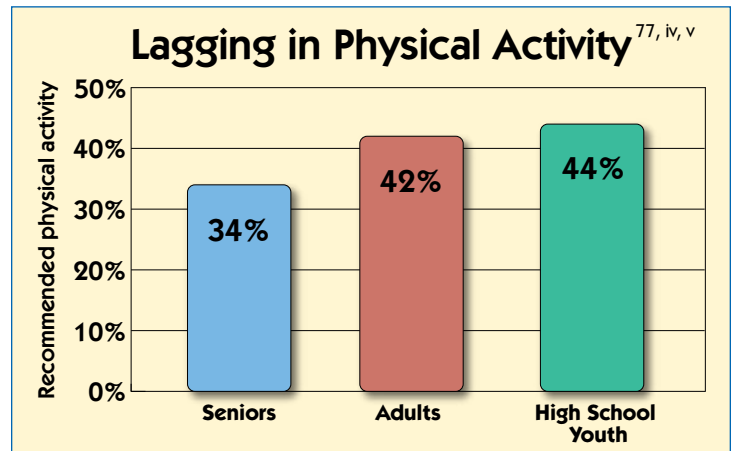
North Carolinians aren't getting enough physical activity.

Lack of physical activity increases risk of heart disease, stroke, obesity and diabetes. Experts recommend physical activity that raises your heart rate – at least 30 minutes for adults,⁷⁰ 60 minutes for youth⁷¹– on all or most days of the week.



- Barely half of high school students get the recommended amount of physical activity.^{72, v}
- Less than half of adults and one third of seniors are getting enough physical activity.^{73, iv}
- A quarter of North Carolinians say they get no physical activity at all.⁷³

- More than one third of students watch at least 3 hours of TV every school day.⁷⁴
- Only 29% of high school students are attending daily gym class, slightly less than in 2002 (34%).⁷⁵
- The proportion of high school students walking or riding their bike to school doubled in 2008 (13%), up from 6% in 2002.^{76, xi}



Recommendations:

Policymakers: Support legislation that creates communities supportive of physical, healthy lifestyles and personal well-being. Visit www.ncpreventionpartners.org/policy.

Healthcare Providers: Talk with your patients about their exercise habits and safe ways to increase their physical activity. Start the conversation at www.ncpreventionpartners.org/startingtheconversation.

Employers: Create a wellness benefit to help your employees pay for a gym membership or a pair of good running sneakers. Think about offering your employees 30 minutes of paid daily physical activity time. Find out more at www.ncpreventionpartners.org.

Physical Activity Grades*

Behaviors

| INDICATOR | 2005** | Current Status | 2010 Target | 2008 Grade |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|-------------|------------|
| Adults getting recommended amount of physical activity ^{79, iv} | 38% | 42% | 50% | C |
| High school youth getting recommended physical activity ^{80, v} | 22% (Moderate) 61% (Vigorous) | 44% | 52% | F |
| Middle school youth getting recommended physical activity ^{81, v} | 25% (Moderate) 73% (Vigorous) | 53% | 52% | A |
| Seniors getting recommended physical activity ^{82, iv} | 28% | 34% | 50% | C |
| High school students walking or bicycling to school at least once a week ^{83, xi} | 9% | 13% | 55% | F |
| High school youth watching TV \geq 3 hrs. per school day ⁸⁴ | - | 35% | 25% | C |

Environment and Policy

Showed Improvement

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|----------|
| Private health plans offering physical activity benefit, rider or program ⁸⁵ | 50% | 83% | 100% | B |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|----------|

Stayed About the Same

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------|----------|
| Hospitals with fitness center or physical activity prevention/treatment program ⁸⁶ | 32/110 = 29% | 36/147 = 25% | 100% | D |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------|----------|

Flunking

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|----------|
| Public health plans offering physical activity benefit, rider or program ⁸⁷ | 50% | 33% | 100% | F |
| High school students attending physical education class daily ⁸⁸ | 31% | 29% | 100% | F |

*Grades are based on Healthy People 2010 objectives and targets for the nation. Grading scales vary by indicator.

**Report card issue date.

Be Healthy at Home

If you use tobacco, quitting now is the most important thing you can do to improve your health. Talk to your doctor or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).

- Medicine can double the chances of quitting for good. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about using the patch, gum or prescription medications to help you quit.

Talk to your doctor about your weight, your diet, and your physical activity.

- Even a little more physical activity – such as taking a brisk walk – can help you reach a healthier weight. Adults – work your way up to 30 minutes a day (60 minutes for youth), 5 days a week. Your health will improve, even if you don't lose weight.
- Try the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Limit time in front of the TV, computer and with game systems – try taking a walk instead.
- Eat smaller portions, bring your own lunch, and keep fruits and vegetables for snacking.
- Try replacing regular soda with diet soda or water.
- Eat at the table, not at the TV.



More Information:

- Quit smoking: www.quitnownc.org
- Lose weight: www.fda.gov/loseweight
- Be more active: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/index.htm
- Find your healthy diet: www.mypyramid.gov
- Eat Smart Move More: www.myeatssmartmovemore.com



NC Prevention Partners – Prevention programs for work, school and home: www.ncpreventionpartners.org

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